

contracts with Madame Patti for next season are signed, but they are as good as signed. I've contracted already singing with a great contralto and with Dahl. I'm waiting now until the close of the opera season in London before engaging any tenors. And as for Del Rio—well, we've got him in, in spite of what Mr. Abbey has to say to the contrary. I've got a contralto singer, one Puente and by my side I've got a baritone man that ought justly to make me say that I'm engaged for next season to Mr. Abbey talks nonsense. And there's Madame Nilsson. She is engaged to me for next season, although she says she is not. Why, here is the contract made by my secretary on the official paper of the opera company and signed by Madame Nilsson herself. There's her nature, and, of course, that's enough. And if she tempts to sing with Mr. Abbey I shall put a stop to it by endeavor to make her sing with me under my management. You see, I don't allow myself the most unreasonable contract which no opera manager would agree to under any considerations, and was me to sign it. I refused to do so, and had some alterations made in it, and then both of us signed it. If I myself the one she first presented, I would have been myself liable for about \$100,000, and if she had had notion to leave me after the first week's singing for a little breach of the contract, no matter how small, would have been out all that amount. I would have to continue paying her a salary, even if she did not sing. She insists that that's the thing I've got to show for a contract is a letter, and if that's a letter and not a contract I'd like to know